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THIS IS UNEVALUATED INFORMATION

1. Railway facilities in Czechoslovakia are overloaded. Passenger trains are frequently so crowded that people must stand in the aisles, doors, and toilets. This may be in part attributed to the fact that the Communist regime has assigned people to work some distance away from their homes; since they cannot find quarters near their place of work, they must use the railways. Apparently there is also a shortage of freight cars as they are all old and run-down. Both passenger and freight cars must constantly be repaired. In addition, there is a shortage of railway personnel; male employees are being transferred to factories, and replaced as conductors, station attendants, cleaners, etc, by women.
2. Locomotives are not repaired well; breakdowns occur soon after repairs are made. Old pre-war locomotives are left in "railway graveyards", probably waiting to be stripped of usable parts. New locomotives are produced at the Skoda Works in Pilsen.
3. With the exception of a few new passenger coaches on express runs, all passenger cars are old and dilapidated. A large number were taken from the Germans after World War II; the rest are of Czech manufacture. Little attention is paid to the repair of passenger coaches. Although there is a shortage of steel and iron as well as manpower, a few passenger and freight cars are produced in a plant in Studenka u Ostravy /4944N-1805E/. The seats and backrests of the new coaches, which are used on express trains, are covered with red synthetic leather. Door handles and other metallic parts of the coaches are made from ferrous metals and soon work loose and become detached. I have also noticed that in the older coaches, door handles and other parts formerly made from non-ferrous metals have been replaced by ones made from ferrous metals; this would seem to indicate a serious shortage of non-ferrous metals. The coaches are not kept clean, and facilities such as toilets are not kept in

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working order. [redacted] new coaches from Olomouc to Opava [redacted] doors would not close; the entrance to the coach was full of snow. The coach was not heated well and passengers had to keep on their heavy winter clothing. Some of the windows had been broken. Out of 10 or 12 coaches on a train, only two or three would be lighted, and then only with gas lights which were quite weak,

4. Railway tracks seem to be in a constant state of repair; ties must be replaced frequently. Repairs are very slow, for instance, the important railroad bridge near Opava was not completed until 1951. Until it was completed, trains had to slow down to a "crawl" to cross the temporary wooden bridge. In 1950, near Krov [5006N-1743E], a train was derailed on a portion of track where trains ordinarily travelled very slowly.

[redacted] the cause of the accident was faulty repairs. [redacted] one side of the track had given way due to faulty spikes. Although the wheels on one side stayed on the track, those on the other side had slipped off and had sheared off the heads of the spikes just inside the tracks. [redacted] The tunnel at Chocen [5000N-1614E] had been cut open; the reason might have been to eliminate the danger of sabotage.

5. Railway stations throughout the CSR are dirty and run down, badly in need of renovation. But all of them have their share of Communist posters and pictures of Red leaders. There are a number of railroad stations under construction or being renovated; this has been going on since 1945 and some of them are still far from completion. The station in Ceska Trebova [4954N-1627E] was being enlarged early in 1952. At the same time the new railway station in Prostějov [4928N-1797E] was being completed.

6. Railroad employees frequently pledged to get their trains to their destination on time, but trains were often delayed particularly in the winter when they ran 30, 50 and sometimes as much as 90 minutes behind schedule.

7. In the Fall of 1951, it was officially announced that due to the increased volume of railroad freight, the operation of certain trains would be curtailed as of 7 Oct 51. As of that date, in Moravia-Silesia a total of 44 train runs were limited between certain points or allowed to operate only on certain days; 411 runs were halted completely. This curtailment caused general confusion. Although new schedules were published, many people would forget. In addition, trains were cancelled and reinstated without warning. In most cases, notices were posted on railway bulletin boards, but this was usually too late to avoid confusion.

[redacted] There were 20-30 people waiting there for the train to Novy Jicin. It was suddenly announced that the train had been cancelled and the people had to get to Novy Jicin by some other means. [redacted]

8. There is a shortage of manpower for loading and unloading freight cars. When there are not enough workers of the State transportation system, student brigades are called in to do the work. This happened in the case of a carload of potatoes that arrived at the Opava station in 1950. In addition there are not adequate facilities for hauling the goods to and from the stations. Tractors are being used more and more for this purpose. In 1948, it took three days for a case of books to be delivered [redacted] from the Opava station. [redacted] There was one truck available for freight deliveries in Opava. It belonged to the State Transportation system (Ceskoslovenske statni braky - CSD). [redacted]

9. The standard railroad gauge in the CSR is somewhat narrower than the Soviet. Even narrower tracks are used for construction jobs and in mining areas.

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